cinematheque

SUMMER SEASON 1988

FEATURING

Films and appearances by:
Betzy Bromberg, George Kuchar, Jon Jost, Dana Plays, Andrej Zdravic

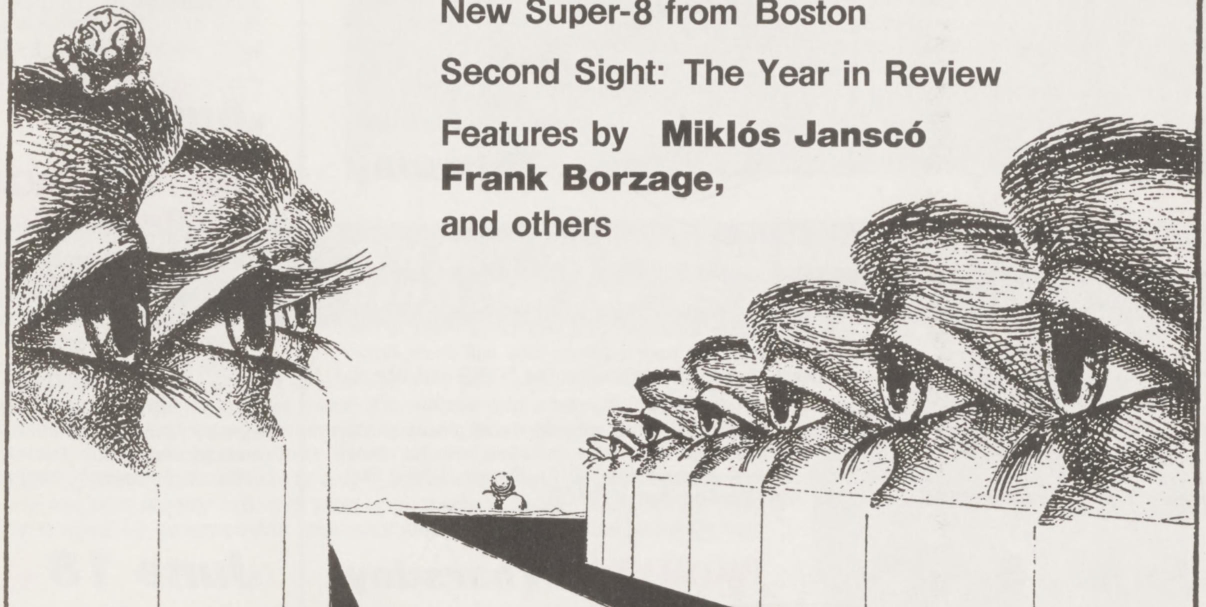
New British Avant-garde

"Sexism, Colonialism, Misrepresentation"
— A 2-part series

New Super-8 from Boston

Second Sight: The Year in Review

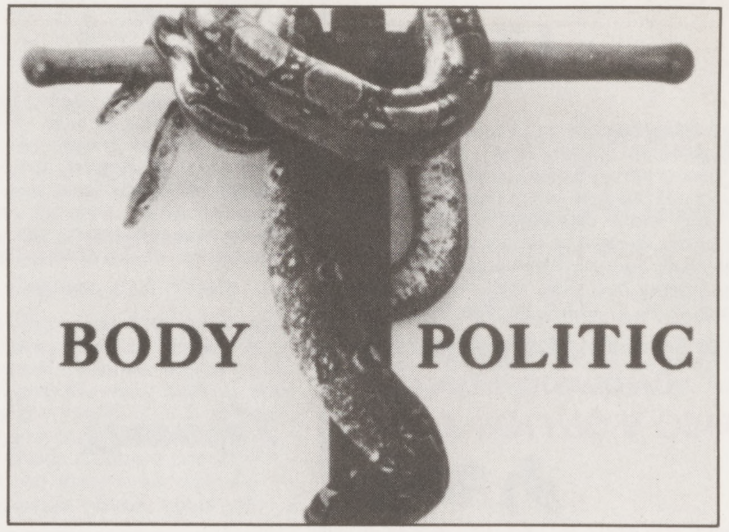
Features by **Miklós Janscó**
Frank Borzage,
and others



COLLAGE by Max Ernst

VIA RIO by D. Plays (June 9)

A MAN'S CASTLE by F. Borzage (June 12)



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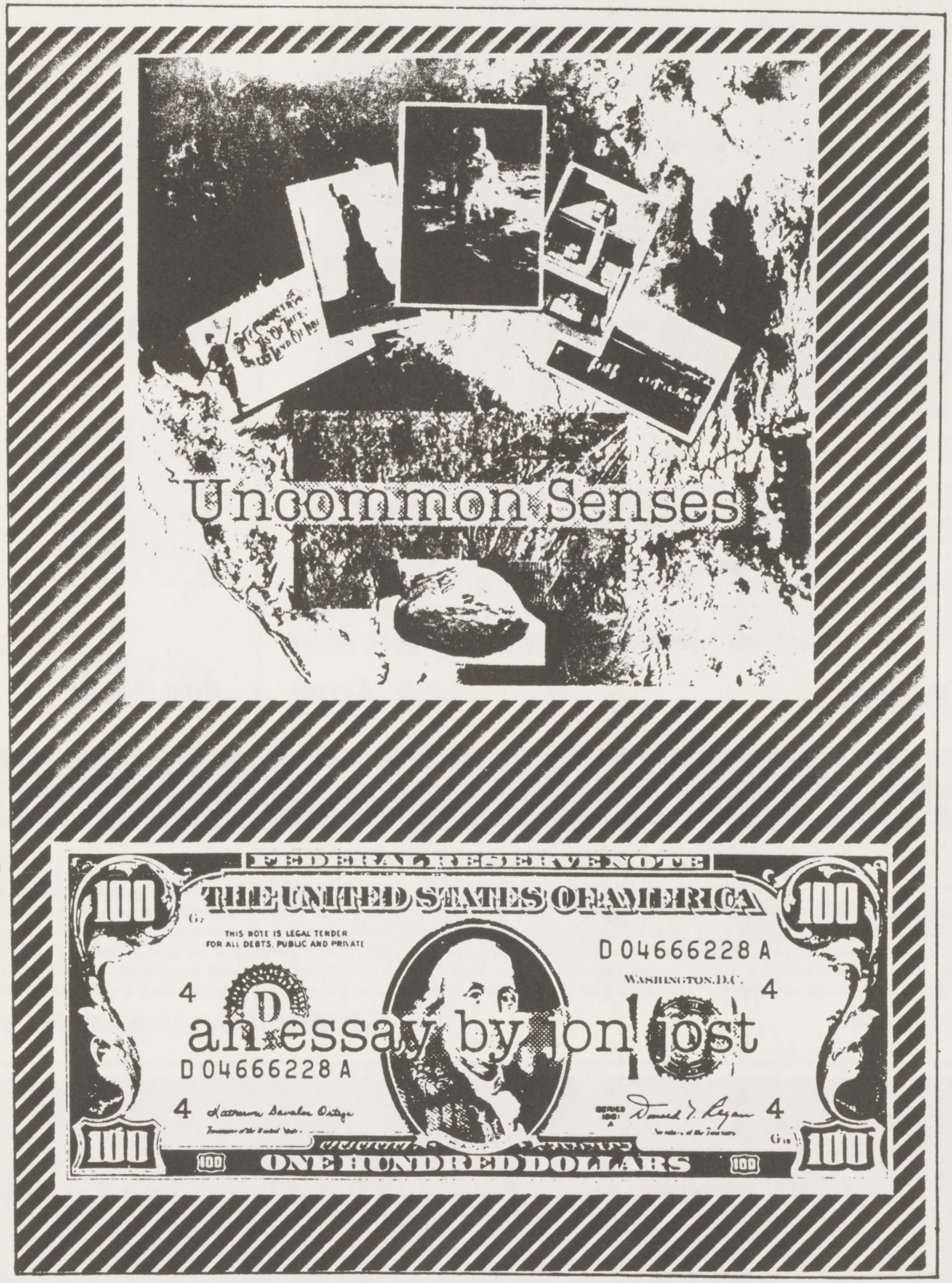
George Kuchar & crew (May 7)

IVAN THE TERRIBLE by S. Eisenstein (May 8)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Uncommon Senses
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UNCOMMON SENSES by J. Jost (June 2)

cinematheque

San Francisco Cinematheque
480 Potrero Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 558-8129

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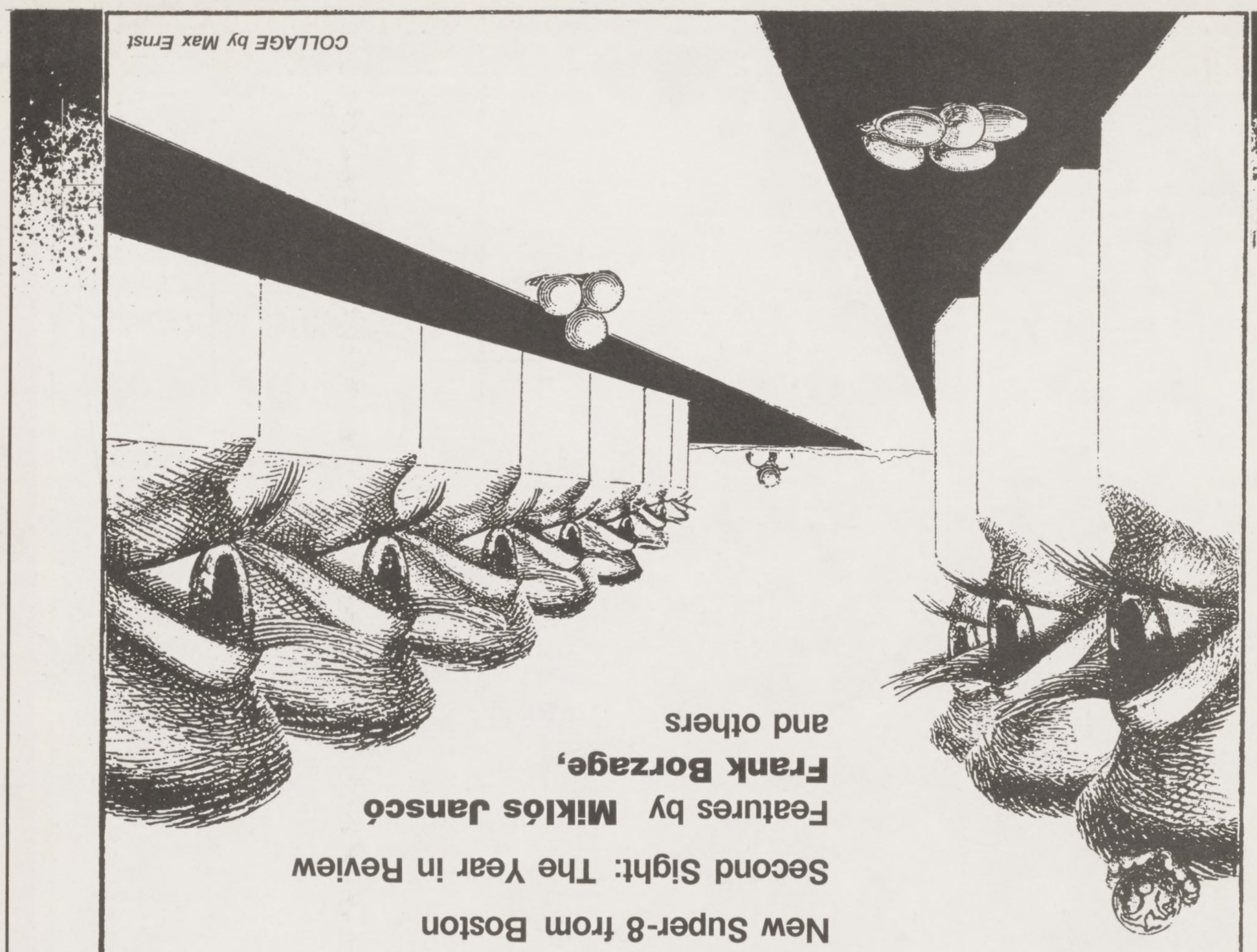

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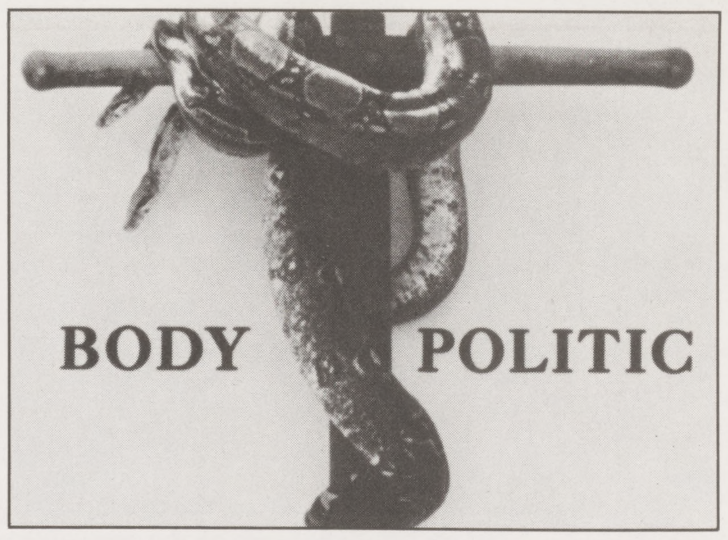

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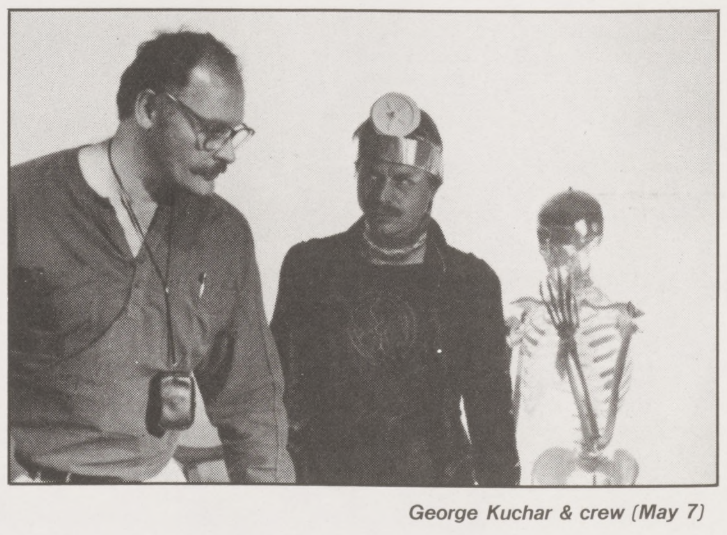

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San Francisco cinematheque

HIGHLIGHTS

The Cinematheque's season concludes with appearances by several local filmmakers (Dana Plays, Andrej Zdravic, Jon Jost, George Kuchar and the numerous artists represented in "First Exposures"), two programs addressing "Sexism, Colonialism, and Misrepresentation" in film, group programs of new work from Boston and England, and a reprise of our successful year-end series "Second Glances" in which films which premiered this season are given second screenings. We want to thank all of you who attended, and look forward to seeing you in September.

NEW MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

For the first time ever the Cinematheque is offering memberships to our friends and supporters. Categories range from $15 to $100, with benefits ranging from discount admissions to all events to free admissions for 2 plus a complimentary copy of Cinematograph (Volume 3 will be published this October). Show your support for the artists and films that make the S.F. Cinematheque one of the leading showcases of independent film in the U.S. by joining now. Your membership, valid for one year, will help insure the continuing exhibition of the most challenging and original works in film and related media available today. For more information, call the Cinematheque office at 558-8129.

THURSDAYS at the S.F. ART INSTITUTE 800 Chestnut St. 8:00 P.M.

***17 Reasons Why** by Nathaniel Dorsky (June 19)*

May 12 Thursday

New British Avant-Garde Film TRACES OF DIFFERENCE

Filmmaker Michael Maziere in person

Michael Maziere, filmmaker and programmer at the London Film-Makers Co-op will present recent films from the British avant-garde. "The films deal with such specific concerns as sexuality, cultural identity, history and subjectivity as well as madness, humor, and death. By using special printing techniques, coloring, and image degradation. . . these films break the boundaries of visual experience to create rich, aesthetic events." (M.M.) Films include ***The Bathers Series III*** by Maziere, inspired by Cezanne, ***The Descent of the Seductrice*** by Jean Mathee, using the *femme fatale* to stress the impossibility of fantasy and failure of the image. Work by John Smith, Pier Wilkie, Sandra Lahire, Anna Thew, Moira Sweeney, Nik Gordon Smith.

May 19 Thursday

THE MAGIC AND ALCHEMY OF HARRY SMITH

Special starting time: 7:30 P.M.

Alchemist and saint, lyricist and madman: these are just a few descriptions of Harry Smith by friends and colleagues which have appeared over the years. Tonight's program offers a rare opportunity to view the major works of this unique, legendary figure of avant-garde film, and includes all of Smith's completed films as of 1975. The results of 30 years' labor, these extraordinarily beautiful films cover a wide range of cinematic styles: from color batiking and painting on film in ***Early Abstractions***, black and white cut-out collage animation of ***Heaven and Earth Magic Feature***, to the photographic multiple layerings of ***Late Superimpositions***.

May 26 Thursday

NEW FILMS: PORTRAITS AND REMINISCENCES

Films by Larry Gottheim, Sharon Couzin, Vincent Grenier, and others

Tonight we will present the final group program of new short films of the 1987-88 season, focusing on densely layered portraits and reminiscences by filmmakers. ***The Red Thread*** (1987) by Larry Gottheim "was mostly shot in San Francisco and Northern California, with material filmed (using the camera almost as a p/r/a/inter, a means of shaping the visual world as film, but without reflection) in response to what the world was opening in me." (L.G.); ***I.D. (Milton)*** (1988) by Vincent Grenier presents the poet Milton Kessler as he recounts several anecdotes, weaving them into complex new meanings; ***Pauline*** (1985) by Sharon Couzin, a portrait of a painter and her world, expressed through the qualities of light and space in her daily life.

June 2 Thursday

PLAIN TALK & COMMON SENSE By Jon Jost

Filmmaker Jon Jost in person

The Cinematheque and Film Arts Foundation welcome Jon Jost back to present the San Francisco Premiere of his new film, ***Plain Talk & Common Sense (Uncommon Senses).*** Unlike Jost's recent fictional films (***Angel City, Bell Diamond***), ***Uncommon Senses*** is a passionate and sardonic "essay" that skillfully weaves dramatic scenes, computer graphics, quotations from pop iconography and political speeches to undercut the mythology behind America and American ideals. "It is the intention of ***Uncommon Senses*** to open the viewer to the simultaneous complexity and simplicity of a discourse on 'America', a discourse which necessarily must range far and wide. . . and which must, as Thoreau noted over a century ago, finally come to rest and fruition within the solitary individual." (J.J.) Co-sponsored with the Film Arts Foundation.

June 9 Thursday

DANA PLAYS/ANDREJ ZDRAVIC

Both filmmakers will be present

Coming to film with a background in art (printmaking, photography) and a cultural perspective based on lifelong contact with Latin and Native American cultures, Dana Plays is concerned with balancing formal aspects of her films with their content. She will show ***Arrow Creek*** (1978), ***Across the Border*** (1982), ***Don't Means Do*** (1983), ***Via Rio*** (1985) and ***Shards*** (1988).

Andrej Zdravic is well known to Cinematheque audiences for his sensual, visual pieces which blend complex soundtracks. He will show a selection of early work not seen here for many years, reflecting further development in later work: ***Carbon Arc*** (1976), ***Phenix*** (1975), ***Sunhopsoon*** (1976), ***Vesuvio*** (1981), and ***New York Studies, Part V*** (1977).

June 16 Thursday

SECOND SIGHTS: I

Highlights of the year's premieres

We will conclude our Spring calendar with three evenings which offer a second look at some of the strongest films which premiered during the past twelve months. It has been a rich year, and these programs hardly exhaust the many quality films we have shown.

Tonight's films: ***Dante Quartet*** by Stan Brakhage
The Lighted Field by Andrew Noren
diary of an autistic child, part III/hard core family by Edwin Cariati

SATURDAYS at the EYE GALLERY 1151 Mission St. 8:00 P.M.

May 7 Saturday

GEORGE KUCHAR: THE WINTER TAPES

Film/video maker George Kuchar in person

George Kuchar continues to amaze with his inexhaustible ability to give cinematic form to his daily life. Tonight's program includes four sections of his ongoing diary, each receiving its Bay Area premiere: ***Rainy Season***, "part of my holiday series as Thanksgiving is embedded in this production which is sort of bleak in outlook. There are shots of food and hints of sex but the dampness aggravates the rotting tendencies of both pleasures as the joy is short-lived"; ***Mecca of the Frigid***, "Winter is in full swing in Milwaukee as I visit the University and drop in on Bob Nelson. There is life beneath the frozen exteriors"; ***Return to the House of Pain***, "Snow coats the 'Big Apple' as we descend into the halls of the Millenium and then surface back to the 'Golden State' which is tarnished by gastric distress"; and ***Xmas-New Years***, in which "happiness returns to the season of merriment as a fireplace burns. Christmas lights bubble and living things chomp on things that once lived also." (G.K.)

May 14 Saturday

BODY POLITIC & Others by Betzy Bromberg

Filmmaker Betzy Bromberg in person

Tonight marks the return of Betzy Bromberg who will be premiering her major new work, ***Body Politic (god melts bad meat)*** (1988, 39 min.). Bromberg's earlier films gained instant notoriety and respect for their forthright treatment of sensitive personal and social themes, realized through an aggressive and expressionistic use of sounds and images. Of the earlier ***Ciao Bella***, J. Hoberman wrote: "This assemblage mixes verite of Lower East Side bikers, Times Square topless dancers, and Coney Island to achieve a highly charged atmosphere of manic exhibitionism and sexual raunch." ***Body Politic*** travels through a realm of modern moral dilemma as it examines the relationship between high-technology medicine, religion, politics, and the American family. Bromberg will show these two plus the earlier ***Marasmus*** (1981).

May 21 Saturday

OPEN SCREENING

The Cinematheque presents the final Open Screening of the '87-'88 season. Filmmakers are invited to bring recently completed films or works in progress. For this last screening we ask that you bring films (in any gauge) by 7:30 to help insure that the show runs smoothly. Admission is free.

May 28 Saturday

FIRST EXPOSURES: NEW FILMS & VIDEOTAPES

New works curated by Jeanne Finley and Lynn Kirby

This show premieres a selection of diverse films and tapes by artists who have not previously shown at the Cinematheque. Ranging in approach from explorations of narrative to using the camera as a surveillance tool, this program was curated by Jeanne Finley and Lynn Kirby who are interested in promoting showcases for new artists and in establishing a dialogue between film and video work. Included will be work by: Larry Andrews, Paula Levine, Jason Simon, Victoria Beardon, Phil Elie, Paul Mcleod, Lily Hotchkiss, Kimberely Jennings, Zoe Vivino, Laurie Bernard, Ted White, Leslie Alperin, and Hrabba Gunnarsdottir.

June 4 Saturday

COLD EYE, TATTERED LOOK: Super 8 from Boston

Tonight's program features mostly new super 8 films selected by Boston filmmaker Saul Levine, whose influence has helped make that city one of the most productive arenas for super 8 filmmaking in the country. "Current in screening rooms, lofts and cellars, these works turn a cold eye at super 8 and a hard look at the representation of intimacy, sexuality, and privacy in a world of escalating surveillance management. Though presenting bleak vistas, these films are also filled with wit, laughter, and music." (S.L.) Films include ***Scrape*** and ***Shmateh IV*** by Levine, ***Going to the Dogs*** and ***Spying*** by Joe Gibbons, ***Crime Home Movies*** and ***Elvis Unchained*** by Dana Moser, ***Reproduction: the Original Sin*** by Sylvia Gruner, ***Red Rooster*** and ***Rah!Rah!Rah!*** by Tom Rhoads, ***,Nor*** by Pelle Lowe, ***Talking to Mysel f*** by Anne Robertson, and ***Baby Al*** by Ann Steaurnangle.

June 11 Saturday

THE FIGHT AGAINST APARTHEID Two Recent Views

Special Starting Times: 7:30 and 9:30 P.M.

Tonight the Cinematheque presents two recent works which portray the struggle against racism in South Africa both there as well as in the Bay Area. ***Biko: Breaking the Silence*** is the first serious treatment on the life and ideas of the slain resistance leader Steve Biko. A Zimbabwe documentary team explore Biko's intellectual development, why he became such a galvanizing figure, the circumstances of his murder, and his impact on the development of the freedom movement in the decade since his death. ***Soweto to Berkeley*** is a locally produced tape by Richard Bock, Eric Auchard, and Scott Wiseman which explores the student protests and debates at U.C. Berkeley which led to the Board of Regents' decision to withdraw $3.1 billion in funds from companies doing business in South Africa.

June 18 Saturday

SECOND SIGHTS: II

Our second program highlighting some of this past year's premieres focuses primarily on films which employ new approaches to narrative and narration.

Films: ***MAYHEM*** by Abigail Child
Medical Research/Special Report by Robert Fox
The Secret Garden by Phil Solomon
Coming Up For Air by Chick Strand

SUNDAYS at the S.F. ART INSTITUTE 800 Chestnut St. 8:00 P.M.

May 8 Sunday

IVAN THE TERRIBLE by Sergei Eisenstein

Special Starting Time: Part I, 7:30 P.M.; Part II, 9:15 P.M.

Ivan the Terrible, Part 1 (1944), 96 min., b&w; Part II (1946), 90 min., b&w/color; both starring Nikolai Cherkassov, photographed by E. Tisse and A. Moskvin, music by S. Prokofiev.

Eisenstein's final and in many respects grandest achievement is rarely, if ever shown (even in repertory-rich San Francisco). An anti-realist depiction of the life and battles of the notorious 16th century Russian Tsar, Eisenstein's ***Ivan*** is operatic and richly stylized in its use of space, movement, and period detail. Criticized by Stalin for its representation of totalitarian power, the second part was suppressed until 1958.

PHENIX by A. Zdravic (June 9)

May 22 Sunday

SEXISM, COLONIALISM, MISREPRESENTATION I

Guest curated by Berenice Reynaud and Yvonne Rainer

The Series, "Sexism, Colonialism, Misrepresentation," curated by filmmaker Yvonne Rainer and critic Berenice Reynaud, took place at the Collective for Living Cinema from April 25 to May 8, 1988. Designed to present "the voices of those — women, people of color, Third World filmmakers — who have been constructed as 'the Other' in mainstream culture. Tonight's program is the first of two adapted from this series, focusing on the cinematic gaze as a tool of sexist and colonialist oppression. Tracy Moffatt's ***Nice Colored Girls*** (Australia, 1986) analyzes how the colonialist has fantasized Aboriginal women 'bad'; Laleen Jayamanne's ***A Song of Ceylon*** (Australia, 1986) is a brilliant creation of 'female fetishism' while critiquing the objectification of the female body. Anna Ambrose's ***Phoelix*** (England, 1979) shows women working in a peep show and deconstructs the voyeurism of the camera." (B.R.)

May 29 Sunday

SEXISM, COLONIALISM, MISREPRESENTATION II

This second program presents two films which "depict how social practices construct women as 'foreigners' in a patriarchal world. Jane Campion's ***A Girl's Own Story*** (Australia, 1984) is an impressionistic rendering of the alienation experienced by teenage girls at school and in their families. Ula Stockl's ***The Sleep of Reason*** (West Germany, 1984) uses the myth of Medea, abandoned by Jason, to express the murderous 'madness' and despair of an Italian gynecologist discovering that her German husband is leaving her. Both films are narrative but involve more than an unexpected surrealistic twist." (B.R.)

June 5 Sunday

MIKLÓS JANSCÓ'S *RED PSALM* A masterpiece of the Hungarian Cinema

Red Psalm (1972) by Miklós Janscó, 88 min., color, with English titles. Set in 19th-century Hungary, this richly symbolic film presents socialist doctrine through the story of an agrarian revolt. The foremost figure in recent Hungarian cinema, Janscó (***The Red and the White***) produces works that employ an aesthetic of uninterrupted single takes to construct parables of historic and cultural reflection. The film is a choreography of actors and camera, at once a positive view of revolutionary movement and a scene ridden with death.

June 12 Sunday

HOLLYWOOD'S GREAT ROMANTIC: 2 By Borzage

Special Starting Time: 7:30 P.M.

Frank Borzage is now considered a major director of Hollywood's Golden Age, but his films are still rarely shown. Throughout his career, ranging from his silent films (***Street Angel, Seventh Heaven***) to his work of the '30s and '40s, Borzage was a master of romantic melodrama, creating images seemingly lit from within and characters whose love and faith transcend adversity. ***Moonrise*** (1948), one of his last and most powerful films, is particularly notable for its exquisite blending of techniques (lyrical moving camera, expressionistic montage) to tell the story of a man trapped by his past who finds renewal through human contact. ***A Man's Castle*** (1934) is the depression era story of two lovers' (Spencer Tracy and Loretta Young) struggle to survive in a shanty town. Programmed by Peter Herwitz.

June 19 Sunday

SECOND SIGHTS: III

The final program of the Cinematheque season features films which push the boundaries of visual expression through particularly cinematic means.

Films: ***The Mysterious Barricades*** by Peter Herwitz
Field Study by Gunvor Nelson
Slant or Slumber by Chika Ogura
17 Reasons Why by Nathaniel Dorsky
Untoward Ends by Daniel Barnett

The San Francisco Cinematheque, a project of the Foundation for Art in Cinema, is supported in part with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, San Francisco's Grants for the Arts, the San Francisco Foundation, the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, the generous contributions of the Friends of the Cinematheque, and the cooperation of the San Francisco Art Institute and Eye Gallery.

Admission: $4.00 general/$2.00 students with I.D., seniors & disabled. To receive future calendars by mail contact the Cinematheque office at 558-8129 or 480 Potrero Ave., S.F., CA 94110. Program Director: Steve Anker; Administrative Director: David Gerstein; Operations Coordinators: Caroline Savage-Lee & Peter Herwitz; Exhibition Assistants: Craig Baldwin, Jamie Erfurdt, Erika Martin, Hiromi Matsuoka, Michael Wallin & Chris White. Poster Design: Alison Wood; Typesetting: KAZAN Typeset Services; Printing: Alonzo Printing Co.